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ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me,
Of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

(*Bhagavadgītā* VI. 30)

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यां दृष्ट्वा यमुनां पिपासुरनिशं व्यूहो गवां गाहते
विद्युत्वानिति नीलकण्ठनिवहो यां द्रष्टुमुत्कण्ठते ।
उत्तंसाय तमालपल्लवमितिच्छिन्दन्ति यां गोपिकाः
कान्तिः कालियशासनस्य वपुषः सा पावनी पातु नः ॥

—*Līlāśuka*

"The azure splendour scattered all round by the Body of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (the Subduer of the serpent Kāliya) is mistaken by the herd of thirsty cows that grazed close about Him for the water of the sacred Yamunā and actually dive into it as such. Nay, peacocks long for its sight, taking it to be a rain-cloud; while the cowherd damsels snatch at it in order to adorn their ears therewith, mistaking it for a collection of dark leaves of a Tamāla tree! May that all-purifying splendour protect us."

Unto Bliss

Remember: attachment and desire mean bondage. There is no bondage in performing the duty awaiting us, without attachment and desire. Work must be done; but it should be done for God's sake, for His pleasure alone.

Remember: man cannot remain unoccupied even for a moment. Therefore, work is indispensable. But a work which is done for the sake of God and with one's thought fixed on Him gets rid of bondage.

Remember: what has been decreed by fate will be obtained even without our seeking it. That, however, which is denied by fate shall elude our grasp, however much we crave for it and however much we exert ourselves to get it.

Remember: a work which does not bear the brand of attachment or desire will result in the purification of the heart, attainment of wisdom and God-Realization. But an act performed with some interested motive will fetch worldly enjoyments alone if it is a meritorious act.

Remember: desireless action is conducive to emancipation, whereas work done with an interested motive prolongs the cycle of births and deaths. Desirelessness breaks asunder all the bonds of a man, while desire binds him with ever new chains, although their form may vary. A fetter is a fetter after all, be it of gold or iron.

Remember: it is desire that leads a man to sin. Desire begets sins. Desirelessness leaves no room for sin.

Remember: when it is clear that birth, existence and death are all steeped in suffering, to work for the next world or for a future life is to court an unhappy state. Therefore, to work with a longing for any other sphere is foolish.

Remember: all enjoyments lead to sorrow. The Lord says in the *Gītā*: "Every enjoyment is productive of woe." Therefore, to work with a craving for enjoyment, even in this life, is anything but wisdom. He who bears the great strain involved in action and invites suffering as a reward for the same is verily a fool.

Remember: all seeking for enjoyment brings bondage and metempsychosis in its wake. Therefore, it is worth giving up, no matter whether it is for the enjoyments of this world or of the next. Of course, the seeking for God-Realization, adoration, the eradication of desire and dispassion is not worth giving up; for such a longing purifies the heart and appears only when the heart has attained some degree of purity.

Remember: the process of this world—which is identical with the cosmic form of the Lord—eternally goes on,—newer and newer scenes appear before our eyes as on a cinema-screen. The man who looks upon this divine play as nothing but play and goes on performing his allotted duty heartily enjoys this game. But he who comes to conceive an attachment for it or to entertain a longing for it gets badly entrapped. Therefore, continue to work, but never allow yourself to be caught in a trap.

Remember: actions performed for the sake of God will be naturally auspicious—they will be invariably pious acts. They will be free from all talk of seizing others' property and will be untainted by falsehood, deceit or wiles. They will not be prompted by any idea of harming others nor will they ever prove harmful to anybody. They will naturally do good to the world; for service of the world consists in serving the Lord, who controls the internal feelings of all and appears as all.

"*Śiva*"

The Heart of the Bhagavadgita—VI

(*Continued from the July number*)

-By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

THE SYNTHESIS OF THE PHALA (GOAL)

I have already indicated in the back numbers the *Gītā* gospel of the goal and crown and consummation of life. The Lord definitely warns us against being content with a mere worldly life or a life in Swarga. He calls the former mere Āsurī Sampatti. He denounces the latter also as a subtler love of pleasures of longer duration, and says that such enjoyment in Swarga will end at some time or other and will result in our being hurled into Saṃsāra or embodied and transient life ruled by the law of birth and death. (II. 42 to 46; IX. 20-21). He advises us to tread the path of the four Yogas and attain the goal of life, *i. e.*, freedom from Karmic bondage and Saṃsāra and attainment of eternal, supreme and infinite Bliss. I have shown also how each of the Yogas can and will lead to such fruition of life. The ideal of Parā Śānti, of Uttama Sukha, of Mokṣa—to mention only a few words with diverse forms but with a single meaning in the *Gītā*—is the real goal of life.

I have already shown,—and I reiterate the truth once more—that this great consummation comes to us by our pursuing any of the four Yogas. It is idle to postulate any grades of beatitude, though there may be many types of beatitude. Each aspect of beatitude is of the nature of supreme eternal infinite Bliss. In each we go beyond and transcend the Guṇas. In each we have communion and union with God.

The question is often asked: Is this supreme infinite eternal happiness to be attained here and now or in a *post mortem* state? Is it to be attained in a disembodied state or in an embodied state? Here again there is a deafening battle of sectarian arguments. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and following in His wake, Vyāsa, adopts an attitude of harmony and synthesis. II. 72 refers to Brahmanirvāṇa attained after a perfect Brāhmī Sthiti throughout life and at the time of death. Chapter VIII of the *Gītā* refers to the Dhyānayogī, who goes after death through the Brahma-Nāḍī out of the body and goes along the Archirādi Mārga to attain the Divine

Being. But Chapter V refers to such Bliss being attained here and now by the Jñānayogī also. Śrī Madhva says that from verse 19 forwards the Lord mingles Sannyāsa and Yoga and Jñāna.

The same immediate *ante-mortem* enjoyment of supreme infinite eternal bliss is predicated of the Dhyānayogī in VI. 27, 28, where we find the words 'Brahma-Saṃsparśa', and 'Brahmabhūta', 'Uttama Sukha' and 'Akṣaya Sukha'. Let no one imagine that the Karmayogī and Bhaktiyogī are left in the lurch. They also attain infinite, immortal, supreme Bliss. (See *Gītā* XVIII. 56 and XIV. 27.)

The *Bhāgavata* says that the Bhaktas are so happy here and now that they do not wish for Paradise or for identity with God and that Bhaktiyoga, like God, is 'Ānanda-Rasa-Sundaraḥ'. (*Vide* VIII. iii. 20 and XI. XIV. 14.)

The fact is that all the four Yogīs have conquered egoism and desire and are rooted in God and are and will be in a state of perfect Bliss here and hereafter. In the *Brahma-Sūtras*, IV. 4. 10 to 14, Vyāsa declares that in Paradise the Lord can be enjoyed by us with a body or without a body. Why should there be any wrangling about the relative superiority of the soul in Śuddha Sattva body enjoying Sāyujya and of the merger of the disembodied Jīvātmā in the Paramātmā—Absolute ? When both attainments are of the nature of infinite supreme eternal Bliss, why should we try to weigh and grade them with our mind, which has no conception of pure Bliss at all ?

ŚRĪ KṚSHṆA, THE SUPREME SYNTHESIS AND SUBLIMATION

In Śrī Kṛṣṇa as described in the *Bhagavadgītā* and its Bhāṣya, *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*, we find a perfect synthesis and sublimation of all the Upāyas (Yogas) and of all the Upeyas (supreme attainments or Siddhis). He loves all equally and is the same to all; but those who love Him live and move and have their being in Him and He lives and moves and has His being in them. (IX. 29)

All move in love unto Him and He moves out in love towards them and appears to them in such forms as they desire and gives them the reward of perfect Bliss. (IV. 11 and VII. 21-22)

He goes to the aid of those who surrender themselves to Him and liberates them from bondage and confers the bliss of liberation soon on them. (XII. 6-7)

He promises liberation to all His devotees irrespective of caste or sex, even if at the beginning they are deficient in Āchāra (IX. 30—33). Let us therefore make a perfect surrender of ourselves unto Him, remembering His final gospel. (XVIII. 65-66)

I have had an inner urge to behold and declare the heart of the *Gītā* as I visualize it. I have done so for two reasons. The first reason is my belief that doing so is a Jñānayajña and will do good and bring His grace to me and to my readers as is evident from verses 68 to 71 of the concluding chapter.

The second reason is that in our country in its disunited distracted distressed state, His grace and our comprehension and carrying out of His commandments and His Gospel of synthesis and sublimation will bring auspiciousness and victory, abundance and righteousness. (XVIII. 78)

Let us, therefore, pray to Him in the thrilling words of Arjuna (X. 12, 13, 14, 18), seek His gospel again and again, enjoy that nectar and be supremely, eternally and infinitely blissful here and now and everywhere and for ever.

CONCLUSION

I have thus far indicated my view of the Heart of Hinduism. My vision is that of a unified synthetized socialized dynamic Hinduism as a world religion. We must realize that there is a parental common trunk of religious doctrine and practice. I do not mind if individuals or groups have minor variations of doctrine or creed, ritual or observance in addition to the same as branches thereof. But I strongly object to that spirit of sectarianism which announces its way as the only way of salvation and denounces every other way as a way of damnation. The heart of Hinduism is unity in diversity. Toleration has been its noblest trait,—not the toleration which is mere latitudinarianism or a supercilious sense of the equal worth or worthlessness of all, but a toleration which is born of a deep sense of the unity of the divine goal despite the diverseness of the Godward roads. Besides unifying itself from within, it must intensify its already existing harmony with Science. At the same time it must be a guard against subservience to dogmatic faith and dogmatic science. Ruskin says well: "In these days you have to guard against the fatalest darkness of the two opposite prides: the pride of faith, which imagines that the nature of the Deity can be defined by its convictions, and the pride of Science, which imagines that the energy of the Deity can be explained by its analysis." I desire also that Hinduism must intensify its gospel of brotherhood and its ethical and social and sociological aspects. It must make the temple a live community centre, a divine home of social love. It must make philanthropy and social service a vital incarnation of itself. Mere individual reformation is not of much value unless it is a part of a social plan; and a social plan by itself is not of much value unless spirituality pervades every thought and word and act. "If a man loves not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ?" The modern tendency to exalt social service above prayer and meditation and spiritual communion is equally a mistake. Religion must make for individual regeneration and salvation as well as for social regeneration and salvation. Let us not forget the wise words of Mr. Burrel in his paper read at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago: "The world will ultimately believe in the religion that produces the highest type of Government and the best average man. All religions must submit to that criterion. By their fruits ye shall know them." I believe that Hinduism will help humanity for ever by intensifying its powers of Synthesis and Sublimation.

(*Concluded*)

Adwaita and Bhakti—XIX

(Continued from the June number)

By S. Lakshminarasimha Sastri, B. A.

But it may still be urged that in the nature of the Mukti envisaged by Bhakti and Jñāna, the two differ from each other. The Mukti attained through Bhakti is Sāyujya, consisting in a merger with Īśwara, without, however, the individuality of the Bhakta being utterly effaced. But the Mukti attained through Jñāna is a total laya or non-differentiated absorption in the Nirguṇa Brahma, not even a vestige of the Jñānī's individuality surviving. How could indeed these two types of Mukti be identical, and consequently how indeed could the means thereto be identical? True, the Mukti attained by Bhakti is no doubt different from that attained through Jñāna; but the difference is purely nominal and inconsequential. How could this be?

Brahma, in the exercise of His Māyā, projects Himself into the Īśwara, Jīva and the Jagat—God, the Individual and the Universe. Brahma's association with Māyā is therefore Saṃsāra, and dissociation from Māyā is Mukti. It follows naturally that every object, high or low, sentient or otherwise, must be eligible for Mukti, since by its very nature it is Brahma and nothing else. Jīvatva (जीवत्व) is but a passing phase, like the sun passing through an eclipse; for the removal of the Indeterminate (अनिर्वचनीय) Māyā is a certainty. But the removal of Nescience of all Jīvas cannot be simultaneous. Some may be eligible for Release even at this instant, but others may be eligible only after aeons and aeons. Those that attain Release at present cannot—as Appayya Dīkṣita points out in his Siddhānta-Leśa-Sangraha—get merged into the Nirguṇa Brahma, though they do certainly get merged with the Īśwara characterized by Śuddha Sattva (शुद्धसत्त्वविशिष्ट ब्रह्म). And since Īśwara cannot be anything other than Īśwara so long as there is a single soul still awaiting release, those who have attained release through Jñāna must get merged not in the Nirguṇa Absolute, but in the Śuddha Sattva Kāraṇa Brahma. But such a Mukti has nothing ephemeral in it, since the Kāraṇa Brahma is above all mutation, and consequently Nitya (Eternal). The Muktas, who have destroyed all their Karma and their individuality, melt away into Īśwara, with no volition of their own except the Supreme Will of Īśwara. They may, however, at the will of Īśwara, be projected into cosmic history as emissaries of Īśwara, as His instruments through whom He fulfils Himself. Mukti, therefore, is not a purely personal concern of each individual as such; for until the final release of *all* Jīvas, the Mukta can attain Oneness not with the Absolute Intelligence, but only with the less perfect—if we may say so—Form, known as Īśwara, whose reflection in Nescience are the many Jīvas. And this view is favoured by the great Bhagavatpāda himself, albeit he is the staunchest advocate of the Absolute Mukti. Śrī Śankara adduces numerous instances of Jīvanmuktas like Apāntaratamas reincarnated as Kṛṣṇa Dwaipāyana, Vasiṣṭha reincarnated as Maitrāvaruṇa, Sanatkumāra as Skanda and Nārada

and Dakṣa in various corporeal forms, while these are not a whit tainted by Prārabdha or other Karmas, and living as they continuously do in the bliss of their spiritual Realization, they are all Adhikārīs who are all charged by the Lord with rendering various forms of services in the worlds of men and gods—उपपन्ना त्वियं चिन्ता ब्रह्मविदामपि केषांचिदितिहासपुराणयोर्देहान्तरोत्पत्तिदर्शनात्......... तेषामपान्तरतमःप्रभृतीनां वेदप्रवर्तनादिषु लोकस्थितिहेतुष्वधिकारेषु नियुक्तानामधिकारतन्त्रत्वास्थितेः ।......एवमपान्तरतमःप्रभृतयोऽपीश्वराः परमेश्वरेण तेषु तेष्वधिकारेषु नियुक्ताः सन्तः सत्यपि सम्यग्दर्शने कैवल्यहेतावक्षीणकर्माणो यावदधिकारमवतिष्ठन्ते । तदवसाने चापवृज्यन्त इत्यविरुद्धम् । (*Sūtra-Bhāṣya* III. iii. 32). Were it not so,—were it not indeed that such Muktas are despatched by Divine Will to work for the weal of mankind, and for the emancipation of the Jīva from the whirlpool of Saṃsāra, this world would be a wilderness indeed. But History, Paurāṇika and Modern, has recorded the advent of supermen among the denizens of the earth to execute the Will of God: they have no individuality of their own: they are from Īśwara, they are of Īśwara, and they *are* Īśwara. And to this godly host do belong Prahlāda, Nārada, Parāśara, Vyāsa, Ambarīṣa, Śuka, Bhīṣma, Arjuna, Vasiṣṭha and many others of hallowed memory whose number is legion. These do indeed stand as sturdy bulwarks against the mad tide of unrighteousness that periodically overruns the world. And, beyond propagating the Divine Name, beyond radiating the Divine Light, they have no personal end to achieve, since they have no personality to call their own. And, to that last moment, when the last Jīva, through Jñāna, becomes Brahma, they abide in Īśwara: and then the work of Māyā being over, all—Īśwara, Jīva and Jagat—vanish and the One Sat-Chit-Ānanda Nirguṇa Brahma alone remains. Hence, even in Mukti, Bhakti and Jñāna are identical.

Bhakti, then, is Jñāna and Jñāna, Bhakti. Though usage has sanctioned and sanctified the use of these terms as denoting different entities, it would be idle to talk glibly of the differences of Bhakti and Jñāna. A Bhakta is a Bhakta because he is a Jñānī; and a Jñānī is a Jñānī because he is a Bhakta. Bhakti may indeed be selfless supreme Love of God. But if God be regarded as being other than one's self, then such love must necessarily be insincere; for what could be dearer than one's own Ātmā, आत्मा प्रियो भवति? And unless Īśwara be realized as one's own Ātmā, with the full awareness that I am He and He is I (त्वं वा अहमस्मि भगवो देवते, अहं वा त्वमसि भगवो देवते), how could sincere love be possible? And when one's Ātmā and Īśwara be realized as one and the same, the self-same love becomes Adwaita Jñāna. Hence, however numerous the strata in Bhakti, Abheda-Bhakti is surely the summit of Bhakti. As the Bhagavān Himself declares, of all types of Bhaktas, the Jñānī, steadfastly devoted to Īśwara, is certainly the dearest unto Him, since He is supremely dear unto the Jñānī.

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥

(*Gītā*. VII. 17)

And wherefore is the Jñānī dear unto Īśwara? Because the Jñānī knows that Vāsudeva is his own Ātmā, and what could be dearer than one's Ātmā?—अहम् आत्मा ज्ञानिनः, अतः तस्य अहम् अत्यर्थं प्रियः प्रसिद्धं हि लोके आत्मा प्रियः भवति इति । तस्मात् ज्ञानिनः आत्मत्वाद् वासुदेवः प्रियः भवतीत्यर्थः । स च ज्ञानी मम वासुदेवस्य आत्मैवेति मम अत्यर्थं प्रियः । (*Śānkara Bhāṣya* on the Śloka).

And who indeed could be dearer unto

Īśwara than he who knows Īśwara to be his own Ātmā, than which nothing could be dearer ? Thus, none who is not a Jñānī could be a true Bhakta and none that is not a true Bhakta could be a Jñānī. And thus, through the long vistas of Paurāṇika history we find great Jñānīs dedicating themselves, heart and soul, to the propagation of the gospel of Bhakti, —such as Parāśara through his *Viṣṇu-purāṇa*, and Śuka through the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. And even in these so-called historic times, those Mahāpuruṣas who are apparently intent on establishing the supremacy of Jñāna—even to the detriment of Bhakti, as it is oft-times alleged—have nevertheless been the greatest Bhaktas. Where indeed could one meet such earnest Bhaktas as the great Śankara Bhagavatpāda, Śrī Madhusūdana Saraswatī, Brahmānanda Saraswatī, the great Appayya Dīkṣita, Sadāśiva Brahmendra, Śrīdhara Venkateśārya and a host of others whose majestic outbursts of Bhakti could hardly be excelled ? Of course, one might miss in the devotional outpourings of these Mahātmās the sentimental niceties and the artistic fineness and the profusion of imagery that characterize the outpourings of the professedly Bhakti schools. But, like the rugged and austere peaks of the Himālayas that rise sheer in their serene splendour right above the verdure-clad foot hills, these simple yet sublime outpourings of Bhakti by the Adwaita Āchāryas outstrip in their earnestness and in their majesty all the artistic and predominantly emotional effusion of others. And yet the cry has gone down the centuries that Adwaita is opposed to Bhakti—nay, has stifled it and that the Adwaita-Āchāryas have stamped Bhakti out of existence by their preponderant bias for Intellectualism; and this myth has been nurtured and kept alive through the ages by the partisan spirit. It shall now, therefore, be our endeavour to illustrate, from the very writings of these Mahātmās, the intense Bhakti that pulsates through every word of their writings.

At the very outset it must be noted that, unlike the Bhaktas of the other schools who are wedded to definite theologies, the Adwaitic Bhaktas glorify and sing the praises of all Forms of Godhead, be it Viṣṇu, Śiva, Ambikā, Gaṇapati or Skanda with equal fervour. True, Bhaktas of other cults do oftentimes indeed celebrate the greatness of the other Mūrtis; but there is always a tendency on their part to underrate the greatness of the other Mūrtis with reference to the Mūrti of their own choice. For instance, staunch Vaiṣṇavas may celebrate the glories of Śiva, Skanda or Umā; but they can hardly refrain from hinting, here and there, at the subservience of these other Mūrtis unto Viṣṇu, thus blazoning forth the supremacy of Viṣṇu over Śiva and the rest. Such again is the case with the Śaivas and the Śāktas. Nor is such an attitude surprising, since, for such Bhaktas, either Śiva, Viṣṇu or Śakti represents the supreme Godhead, the other Mūrtis being mere satellites waiting upon the Supreme God of their own election. But, alone among the Bhaktas, the Adwaita-Jñānī has this supreme advantage over the rest that, whether he sings of Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śakti, Skanda or Gaṇapati, he is ever aware that these names, and the Mūrtis they signify are after all the synonyms and the modes of the One Saguṇa Brahma, the Reality among Realities. And such a

catholicity of outlook naturally engenders – sublime tolerance, the like of which is oftentimes deplorably absent in other sectarian theologies. For, who other than an Adwaitī-Bhakta could exclaim: "Praise be unto Hari, the One Supreme Reality, who, due to the diversity of the intellectual powers of the worshippers, is conventionally spoken of variously as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Agni, the Sun, the Moon, Indra, Vāyu and Varuṇa :—

ब्रह्मा विष्णू रुद्रहुताशौ रविचन्द्रौ
इन्द्रो वायुर्यज्ञ इतीत्थं परिकल्प्य ।
एकं सन्तं यं बहुधाऽऽहुर्मतिभेदात्
तं संसारध्वान्तविनाशं हरिमीडे ॥

(*Hari-Stuti* of Śankarāchārya, 18)

Who, again, other than an Adwaitī could exclaim with sublime assurance:—"Some say that Śiva alone is contemplable. Others declare Śakti and Gaṇeśa, while a third class of devotees speak of Divākara (the Sun-god) as worth meditating upon. But it is really Thou who appearest in all these Forms. Hence Thou alone art my Refuge, O Lord with a conch !"

ध्येयं वदन्ति शिवमेव हि केचिदन्ये
शक्तिं गणेशमपरे तु दिवाकरं वै ।
रूपैस्तु तैरपि विभासि यतस्त्वमेव
तस्मात्त्वमेव शरणं मम शङ्खपाणे ॥

(*Śrī Hariśaraṇāṣṭakam* of Gauḍa Brahmānanda, 1)

And another advantage the Adwaiti-Bhakta has over the Bhaktas of the other schools is that, whereas the others stress and often recognize only the Personal Īśwara, the former is ever aware of the Formlessness and All-pervasiveness of Īśwara, who nevertheless deigns to manifest Himself in a limited Personal Aspect out of compassion to His devotees. Does not Viṣṇu, the Indweller in all (विष्णुः सर्वगुहाशयः), nevertheless manifest Himself as the Divinity reclining on Ādi-Śeṣa ?

आकाररूपगुणयोगविवर्जितोऽपि
भक्तानुकम्पननिमित्तगृहीतमूर्त्तिः
यः सर्वगोऽपि कृतशेषशरीरशय्यो
दृग्गोचरो भवतु मेऽद्य स दीनबन्धुः ॥

(*Dīnabandhvaṣṭakam* of Brahmānanda, 6)

In fact, the Adwaitī-Bhakta rises sheer above all sectarian affiliations, and, though, for practical purposes of Upāsanā, he may be devoted to Viṣṇu, Śiva or Śakti, he hardly makes any invidious distinctions among the Mūrtis. And further he is able to regard with indulgence all sects, all phases of religious activity, from gross animism and totemism to the highest monotheism and monism with equal respect, since all these, be they high or low, are the various manifestations of the Divine,—rather, the various concepts of the various sectaries with regard to the Divine, as conceived by their intellects. The sectaries, swayed by fanaticism, may be petulant, aggressive, militant. But the Adwaitī, whose philosophic stand encompasses all types of sectarianism and at once transcends all such limitations, is tolerant of all sects. From the enlightened worship of the Antaryāmī to the worship of the Aśwattha and the other trees, there is a whole gamut of religious practices, which nevertheless are the modulations of the Fundamental Note of the Non-dual Brahma. Hence the Bhakta of the Adwaita school is equally at ease when singing the praises of Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Śiva, Śakti or Skanda.

We shall now pass on to the consideration of a few excerpts from the writings of the luminaries of the Adwaita school, illustrating the depth and sincerity of their Bhakti—and thus we shall dispel

the mistaken notion that Adwaita will have none of Bhakti. And no more striking instance of a Jñānī of the highest order being a Bhakta of unquestioned eminence as well can be had than in the case of the great Bhagavatpāda himself. As the late Prof. Kuppuswami Śāstrī aptly puts it, "Many scholars know well that Śrī Śankara is the greatest poet of the Supreme Brahma—निर्गुणब्रह्ममहाकविः and the best illustration of this observation can be easily found in the superb prose-poetry of Śrī Śankara's *Brahmasūtra-Bhāṣya*. Often we find Śrī Śankara climbing down from the highest metaphysical peak of Nirguṇa Brahma to enjoy the delight of playing the role of a great Bhakta through his poetic outpourings of devotion. And in this mood Śrī Śankara might well be imagined to have written his Bhāṣya on the Viṣṇu-Sahasranāma. Wherever he does so, he may be imagined to have been prompted by the same spirit which influenced the Supreme Lord to manifest Himself in human form as Śrī Rāma or Śrī Kṛṣṇa. ....."(Foreword to *Śrī Viṣṇu-Sahasranāma-Stotram*—Śrī Kāñchī Kāmakoṭi Kośasthāna Publication, pages 7 and 8).

There is hardly any aspect of the Divine, any Avatāra of the Divine, which the Bhagavatpāda has not sung about with fervour. Nor is this surprising, seeing that He was the great Shaṇmatasthāpakāchārya—the Founder of the six systems of worship, the Gāṇapatya, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Śākta, Saura and Skānda—all on the chastened Vedic foundations, cleansed of all abominable accretions that had gathered round them due to age-long Avaidika influences. For him, therefore, Gaṇapati or Skanda or Śiva or Śakti or Āditya or Viṣṇu is the symbol of the Supreme Īśwara, the Saguṇa Brahma. In fact, it was he who enjoined the daily worship of the first five of these Mūrtis—the worship of the Pañchāyatana—as an integral part of Sadāchāra. Is it surprising, then, that he sings of all of them with equal fervour ?

But here arises another question, with respect to the authenticity of these Stotras of Śankara. Even among such of those as believe in tradition, there are some who hold that the author of the *Saundaryalaharī* cannot be the author of the Śivānandalaharī, and the poet-saint who sings the Viṣṇu-Pādādikeśānta-Stotra cannot be the same as the poet of the Śiva-Keśādipadānta-Stotra. And this issue has been further aggravated by the methods of historic criticism with its supposedly infallible canons of internal, external and other evidences. Dr. Belvelkar, for instance, would dismiss almost all the Stotras ascribed to Śankara as spurious, sparing only a few, like the *Dakṣiṇāmūrti-Aṣṭaka*, *Daśaślokī*, *Bhaja Govindam* etc. All the rest is branded spurious on the ground that there is the ring of metrical artificiality and a certain degree of conventionalism, which detracts a lot from the spontaneity that must characterize outbursts of devotional fervour. To condemn a vast body of Stotras as spurious on the purely arbitrary and never-too-sound criterion of the supposed artificiality and conventionalism is certainly not to do justice to them. For, what may appear artificial to us after a thousand years and more might have been the most natural, the most spontaneous mode of

expression for the Bhagavatpāda, serving him as spells of welcome relaxation from his herculean commentatorial and dialectical labours. Certainly all metrical possibilities, artificial as they might appear to us, must have been but child's play for such an unquestioned master of the language as the great Āchārya was. And the so-called test of "literary style" is another dangerously arbitrary criterion to be applied to evaluate the genuineness of the works of a versatile genius as the Bhagavatpāda. He could be simple, terse, profound, yet perspicuous as in his commentaries; he could again be so sublimely simple and direct as to appeal to the understanding of the very average man not endowed with a subtle intellect to launch on metaphysical discussions. To regard a certain literary form as Śrī Śankara's style, and dismiss all other forms that do not conform to that standard as spurious is, to say the least, high-handed; and worse, it is to presume to set limits to Śankara's literary powers. And, as for the so-called conventionalism in the Stotras, nothing is conventional to start with. Anything becomes conventional by being hackneyed. And if the so-called conventionalism is objected to, then every act, every phase of our life must be open to the objection of being conventional. We are nothing if not egregiously conventional. Why, is not the historic critic himself swayed by the tyranny of conventions, though, ironically enough, he may imagine himself to be above all conventions? Is not the whole of the Alankāra-Śāstra a set of conventions? Is not Vyākaraṇa (grammar) a set of conventions? Conventionalism sets in when certain forms grow rigid and inelastic due to mediocre imitations, the originality and the pristine freshness being lost sight of. We have legions of Stotras of an undoubtedly inferior brand modelled on Śrī Śankara's; and if we are to judge Śrī Śankara's Stotras in the light of the vast body of the later Stotra literature, then indeed should Śankara's hymns be regarded as conventional. But when we approach his works with no prior obsession as to conventionalism, we certainly would find them fresh, direct and earnest in their appeal.

True, among the vast body of Stotra literature attributed to Śrī Śankara, there must at least be some which must be spurious. Great names in Hindu Hagiology and literature are often made authors of works of whose existence they would never have dreamt. Some inferior writer often prefers to hide his identity and embalm his literary effort of doubtful worth in the aroma of the names of the great writers. Works without number—whose authors, curiously enough, are oftentimes alive to-day—are fathered on Vyāsa, on Śrī Vidyāraṇya and on Śankara. In the field of poetry too Kālidāsa enjoys the dubious honour of being the author of many works of which he would ever wish to be innocent. Such a practice of foisting compositions on renowned writers is no doubt common among us. Hence, admitting that some at least of the vast body of hymns attributed to Śankara are spurious, we at least do not lose anything by such an admission. If such compositions are not from the pen of the great Ādi Śankara, they may at least be, and indeed are, from the pen of some no less worthy successors of his to the Pontificate that

he founded, who, even to this day, are referred to with the honorific of Śankara. And, so far as we are concerned, it makes very little difference indeed, since our aim is primarily to show that the Adwaitīs are none the less great Bhaktas—and the successors of Śrī Śankara to the Pontificate are certainly Adwaitīs of a very high order. Hence, even admitting the possibility of spuriousness with regard to some of the compositions usually attributed to Śrī Śankara, our position is not a whit invalidated.

(*To be continued*)

Devotion to God, Good Morals and the Glory of the Gita

(Based on the notes taken from a discourse by Sri Jayadayal Goyandka)

यं ब्रह्मा वरुणेन्द्ररुद्रमरुतः स्तुन्वन्ति दिव्यैः स्तवै-
वेदैः साङ्गपदक्रमोपनिषदैर्गायन्ति यं सामगाः ।
ध्यानावस्थिततद्गतेन मनसा पश्यन्ति यं योगिनो
यस्यान्तं न विदुः सुरासुरगणा देवाय तस्मै नमः ॥

"Obeisances to that self effulgent Being whom Brahmā (the Creator), Rudra (Lord Śiva), Varuṇa (the god presiding over water), Indra (the lord of paradise) and Maruts (the forty-nine wind-gods) extol by means of heavenly psalms; whom expert chanters of Sāmaveda glorify through the Vedas including the Upaniṣad texts as well as the branches of knowledge helpful to the study of the Vedas, repeating the words in the proper sequence; whom the Yogīs (mystics) perceive with their mind completely absorbed in Him through meditation, and whose extent neither gods nor demons know."

I am neither qualified nor entitled to instruct or enjoin anybody; I venture to submit a few words by way of supplication only in deference to your wishes. I invite your attention in this connection to the words of our most adorable Lord Śrī Rāma, the ideal Man who rigidly followed the rules of propriety, addressed to His subjects both by way of instruction and command. In the *Rāmacharitamānasa* He says:—'Listen to my words, citizens all: I am not going to say anything out of attachment for you in my heart. I do not ask you to do anything wrong nor do I exercise my authority (as a Ruler). Therefore, give ear to me and act accordingly if you please...... If I say anything which is wrong, brethren, be not afraid to correct me." (*Uttara*, 42. 2-3).

What is worth noting here is that Śrī Rāma was no other than the Almighty Lord, the undisputed sovereign of the entire globe and the best of men, who strictly observed the rules of decorum. He was thus qualified in every way to instruct and enjoin His subjects; yet in what polite and unassuming way He addressed those who were worthy of His respect !

As for myself, whatever I am going to submit is my entreaty to you. If you think it worth while, you may accede to it. You are free agents. Of course, I will feel obliged to those who, on hearing my advice, shall follow it in their practical life.

Lord Śrī Rāma, however, says:—"He

is My servant and he is dearest to Me, who obeys My precepts." I, however, cannot say so. Śrī Rāma was God Almighty Himself and a Ruler too. He was entitled in every way to speak as He did. I wield no power; I am neither God nor a ruler. I can submit whatever I have to say only by way of an appeal or entreaty.

We should reflect and ponder as to why we have been endowed with a human body. It has not been vouchsafed to us for feeding ourselves, enjoying sleep or for copulation. Even animals feed themselves, copulate and sleep. In what respect, then, can we claim superiority to the animal kingdom? Human life has not been granted to us for enjoyment. It has been vouchsafed to us for redeeming our soul! But he who devotes his life to enjoyment even after attaining human birth takes poison in exchange for nectar— नरतनु पाइ विषय मन देहीं। पलटि सुधा ते सठ बिष लेहीं॥ (*Uttara*., 43. 1). Realizing all this we should devote our time to exceedingly noble pursuits. Human birth cannot be had again and again. It is highly gracious on the part of God to have allowed us such a rare opportunity. Having got this golden opportunity we should make the most of our life, lest we may have to repent later on. They who fail to redeem their soul even after attaining human birth "will reap misery in the other world and beat their head in repentance, wrongly attributing the blame to Time, Destiny and God." (*Uttara*., 43).

We should utilize our time most scrupulously. The morning and evening hours which are intended for devotions should be regularly devoted to prayer every day. They who are invested with the sacred thread should daily perform Sandhyā and Japa of the sacred Gāyatrī; while they who are not twice-born should practise devotion according to their qualification. Self-study of the *Gītā* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, muttering the Divine Name and meditation on God—these should be practised by all with intelligence and devotion. The degree of benefit that should accrue to us from the devotions and meditation, worship and recitation that we do is not seen or felt. The reason is that we do not practise adoration, meditation or recitation with intelligence and in the right spirit. While we are engaged in devotions and contemplation, worship and recitation, our mind freely roams about in the outside world, thus reducing our performance to a mere show. It is, of course, better to flounder on like this than not to do it at all; yet, such outward practice has no real value.

Nāma-Japa performed through the acts of inhalation and exhalation is superior to vocal Japa; while mental Japa is superior even to the former. This mental Japa becomes still more valuable if performed with an eye to the significance of the Name repeated and accompanied by meditation. This is borne out by the sage Patañjali when he says:—

तज्जपस्तदर्थभावनम्।

"Repetition of the Divine Name (OM) and contemplation on the meaning thereof."

In the *Gītā* we are told:—

"He who leaves the body and departs, uttering the one indestructible Brahma, OM, and dwelling on Me

> in My absolute aspect, reaches the supreme goal." (VIII. 13)

This sort of Japa, if done without any interested motive, has its value further enhanced. The same thing is true of the *Gītā* as well. He who recites a single chapter intelligently and devoutly is superior to him who goes through the verses of all the eighteen chapters in original without understanding their meaning; and still superior is the man who imprints on his mind even a stray verse of the *Gītā*.

We should spend our time with scrupulous care. Every work should be done while repeating the Lord's name and with our thought fixed on Him all the while. The Lord exhorts Arjuna in the following words:—

> "Therefore, Arjuna, think of Me at all times and fight." (*Gītā* VIII. 7)

Arjuna being a Kṣatriya, the Lord called upon him to fight. In the same way everyone should perform all the duties enjoined by the Śāstras with due regard to his grade in society and stage in life and with his thought fixed on the Lord all the time.

It is the current of worldly thoughts flowing in our mind at the time of our retiring to bed at night which takes the form of a dream and appears as the dream world. Therefore, as long as we keep awake after going to bed we should keep our thoughts fixed on the name, form, virtues, glory, truth and mysteries of God till we are overtaken by sleep. In this way if we retire at night with the current of our thoughts flowing towards God, we shall have good dreams and that part of our time will be naturally spent in spiritual discipline.

God is extremely gracious to us. He has given us a golden opportunity. Mind you, of all the spheres constituting the universe this mortal or human world is the best; and India is the best of all lands on this globe. How very kind it is of God to have vouchsafed to us a birth in this holy Bhāratavarṣa.

Besides, of all the religions popular in this world not one is older than the eternal Vedic religion. The Sanātana Dharma is eternal—dateless. All the other religious systems prevailing in the world are posterior to it. Everyone admits this fact. The Islamic faith, which was founded by Hazrat Mohammed and has the Holy Qoran for its gospel, is about 1400 years old. It did not exist before this. Similarly we are passing through the year 1951 of the Christian era. Two thousand years back the Christian religion had no existence in the world. You will have to admit that it is less than 2000 years old. The doctrine of Lord Buddha, which is popularly known by the name of Buddhism, was not known earlier than 2500 years ago; for its founder, Lord Gautama Buddha, was born about 2500 years ago.

Besides these four world religions there are some minor religions too, which hardly deserve mention here, since they are followed by small minorities. No other religion commands a following of even a few crores. Of course, we can find a large number of men who believe neither in God nor in religion; but we have nothing to do with them.

Thus it has been proved that the Vedic Sanātana Dharma alone is dateless

and eternal; that is why it is known as 'Sanātana'. How very kind it is of the Lord that we have been born in this religion!

Besides, this age of Kali, which is otherwise a mine of vices, possesses one special virtue, viz., that in this age men attain the supreme state by practising devotion to God. Says Goswāmī Tulasīdās in his *Rāmacharitamānasa*:—

> "No other age can compare with the Kali age provided a man has faith (in its virtue); for in this age one can easily cross the ocean of transmigration simply by singing Śrī Rāma's holy praises." (*Uttara.*, 103-A)

This is another act of exceptional grace on the part of God that He has placed such an opportunity in our hands. First of all it is exceedingly difficult to get a human body. There are countless millions of living beings classed under eighty-four lakhs of species. The human species is one of them. The number of souls comprised in it is very small. How very kind it is of God that He has included us in that species. Over and above it, the occasional Satsanga or fellowship of saints that we get constitutes another special favour of God. If we fail to redeem our soul even after getting such rare opportunities, how shameful it is for us!

> "The man who, though equipped with all these resources, fails to cross the ocean of mundane existence is ungrateful and dull-witted and meets the fate of a self-murderer." (*Uttara.*, 44)

Realizing all this we should spend our time in higher and still higher pursuits, that is to say, we should uplift our soul to a higher and higher level. The Lord says in the *Gītā* (VI. 5) that one should lift oneself by one's own efforts and should not degrade oneself. To extend and intensify the activity that we consider as the best is to elevate our soul by our own efforts, and to engage in a pursuit which we consider as ignoble is to degrade ourselves.

The best thing is to think of God at all times; in other words, to repeat the Lord's Name and to meditate on His Being every moment is the best of all pursuits. And in order to strengthen this belief one should cultivate the fellowship of saints; and if this cannot be had, one should study sacred books. But the company of persons of demoniacal propensities should in no case be resorted to. The demoniacal propensities have been described in Chapter XVI, verses 4 to 21 of the *Gītā*. Noble virtues and good conduct should be adopted as something analogous to nectar. These too have been described in Chapter XVI, verses 1 to 3 of the *Gītā*. To practise divine virtues is to elevate one's soul by one's own efforts and to develop demoniacal traits is to degrade oneself.

Therefore, evil traits, immoral practices and vicious habits should be discarded like poison. Lust, anger, greed, infatuation, egotism, partiality, prejudice and all other evil propensities of the mind are what they call evil traits. Foul activities or evil deeds, which we call sins,– such as theft, adultery, meat-eating, drinking, gambling, violence, telling lies and so on constitute what they call immoral practices. Idle gossip, idle thinking and vain pursuits

like playing dice, card-playing, attending cinema shows, visiting clubs for conviviality, smoking and taking Bhang and other intoxicants like cocaine etc. and other activities which serve neither our worldly interests nor the interests of the Spirit are what they call vicious habits

The best thing is to devote all one's time to the realization of one's highest interests. Even if we devote our time to the pursuit of our worldly interests, our real interests should not be lost sight of. But to earn money by falsehood, deceit, theft and dishonesty and to enjoy comforts and luxuries thereby is crass ignorance; for all worldly possessions such as a wife, children, wealth, house etc. are perishable and transient. Nothing of these will accompany us beyond death, not even this body, let alone other things. Why should we lead a sinful life for such a transitory existence? It should be remembered that we alone shall reap the evil consequences of the unjust means we employ in earning money: nor shall the money accompany us to the other world. First of all the government will take a percentage of our earnings in the shape of taxes; another part of it will be given away as contributions and donations; the rest will be shared by partners. The wife and sons too will have their share; after deducting all this whatever is left to us will also remain lying here; not even a small fraction of it will go with us. Under such circumstances, to hoard money by resorting to falsehood, deceit and dishonesty is utter folly.

Considering all this why should we take to wrong-doing for such an ephemeral existence? We should believe that the soul does not perish with the body, but outlives it. The Lord says in the *Gītā*:–

> "In fact, there was never a time when I was not, or when you or these kings were not Nor is it a fact that hereafter we shall all cease to be." (II. 12)

This proves that while the body is ephemeral, the soul is eternal. Says the Lord:—

> "The soul is never born nor dies; nor does it become only after being born. For it is unborn, eternal, everlasting and ancient; even though the body is slain, the soul is not." (*Gītā* II. 20)

When the soul survives the body, it is worth considering why should we befoul our life before we depart from here, knowing as we do that our stay in this world is so short. Human life is exceedingly valuable. Such an opportunity is not to be had again and again. God's grace has placed this opportunity in our hands. Therefore, considering every moment of it as precious, the object for which we have come here should be achieved lest one may have to repent afterwards. This human body has been vouchsafed to us only for the redemption of our soul. Realizing this one should devote all one's time to the realization of this object, ignoring all other duties.

Excepting the Lord and exalted souls we have no other friend or companion. In the *Uttarakāṇḍa* of Goswāmī Tulasīdās' *Rāmacharitamānasa* the people of Ayodhyā make the following submission before the Lord on hearing His discourse:—

> "Everyone in this world has his own axe to grind; no one thinks of others' highest (spiritual) interests even in a dream." (46 3)

This, however, does not denote the total absence of real friends. The people of Ayodhyā tell the Lord that they do have such friends. Who are they?

"You two are the only disinterested benefactors (of mankind) in this world—Yourself and Your servant, O Destroyer of the demons." (*Ibid.*)

Bearing this in mind we should adore and meditate on the Lord and cultivate the fellowship of noble souls in order that our soul may be redeemed as speedily as possible.

Our Śāstras suggest no better or easier course than this. Even if the time left at our disposal is very short, we can attain blessedness provided we give up the ghost with our thought fixed on God. If, however, this all-important work of redeeming our soul remains unaccomplished, no heir of ours shall be able to accomplish it. A work which no one else than we can accomplish should be attended to first of all. Our most important duty is to finish that work for which we have come. The human body has been vouchsafed to us for redeeming the soul rather than for enjoyment—

"Sensuous enjoyment, brethren, is not the be-all and end-all of human existence; even heavenly enjoyment is short-lived and ends in sorrow." (*Rāmacharita.*, *Uttara.*, 43. 1)

The *Gītā* also says:—

"Having enjoyed the extensive heaven-world they return to this world of mortals on the stock of their merits being exhausted." (IX. 21)

Therefore, putting off all other engagements this thing has to be done first; otherwise one will have to repent terribly afterwards. The period of time for which the human body is granted to us is very rare. Not one moment of it can be retrieved by spending even a hundred thousand rupees. If such a valuable time is frittered away on sensuous enjoyment and idle pursuits I can unhesitatingly say that there is no greater fool in this world than we. Human life is sought after even by gods; for redemption of the soul is possible only in this body and in no other body. If we find mention anywhere of a soul having been redeemed in any other body, it should be taken as an exception and not the general rule.

If we spend our time in fattening the body, we are on the wrong track; for it is immaterial whether we add ten pounds of flesh to our body or the quantity of flesh already possessed by us is reduced by ten pounds. In either case it will eventually be reduced to dust and nothing else. We should realize that the body is doomed to perish. Our relation with the body is not real, but only conceived through ignorance. Name and form both are liable to perish. Just ponder a while—people call me 'Jayadayal'. At the time I was born, my name was not 'Jayadayal', much less could it have been my name in the mother's womb. During my stay in the womb it was not even known whether I was a male or a female child. When I was given a name, my parents and other elders could as well have named me 'Mahadayal' rather than 'Jayadayal' if they pleased. In that case I would have called myself 'Mahadayal' today. Thus it is conclusively proved that my name is not 'Jayadayal'.

Therefore, if anybody reviles or praises 'Jayadayal' and I feel mortified or elated thereby, I shall be a fool to do so. If praise and censure bring joy and sorrow, it is a sure indication of ignorance. If I possess real wisdom, applause and censure should be just the same to me. For while describing the marks of a devotee, the Lord says in the *Gītā*:—

> "He who takes praise and reproach alike, and is given to contemplation and contented with any means of subsistence whatsoever, entertaining no sense of ownership and attachment in respect of his dwelling-place, stable of mind and full of devotion to Me, such a man is dear to Me." (XII. 19)

He who has realized the truth also becomes even-minded towards praise and dispraise. (*Gītā* XIV. 24)

As this appellation 'Jayadayal' does not belong to me, even so this body too is not mine nor am I the body. If the body belonged to me, it should accompany me after death; and if I were the body, I should have identified myself even with a severed hand or foot. But we look upon the disjoined member as apart from us. When we no longer identify ourselves with a severed limb, our identification even with the rest of the body is equally erroneous; for the rest of the body is similar to the disjoined member. Hence I am not this body either. They who attain such realization entirely dissociate their self from name and form and reach the supreme state. Therefore, every one of us should give the following suggestions to himself:—"I am other than name and form. The form is objective, while I am the seer; the form is evanescent, while I am eternal; the form is perishable while I am imperishable; the form is full of pain while I am joy itself; the form is changeable, while I am changeless; the form is manifest, while I am unmanifest; the form is finite, while I am beyond the limitations of time and space."

In the *Gītā* we find such injunctions at places more than one. Therefore, my humble submission is that we should make an intelligent study of the *Gītā* and try to enter into its spirit; in other words we should dive deep into it. It is full of deep meaning. As the ocean is fathomless, so the depth of the *Gītā* cannot be sounded.

People may believe to some extent that I am conversant with the *Gītā*. But when I reflect I find that I know not even a hundredth part of it. If I devote myself exclusively to the study of the *Gītā* not only for a whole lifetime but for a number of lives, I may not be able to sound the depth of its meaning. My life will surely come to an end, but there will be no end to the deep layers of its meaning.

Therefore, everyone should saturate one's life with the ideas contained in the *Gītā*. His life alone is blessed. The speech, the sight, the touch of and a talk with persons whose life is full of the *Gītā*, whose whole life is absorbed in the *Gītā*, sanctifies other men.

The *Gītā* is a very sublime book. Its language is very simple, charming and sweet to hear. If you imprint on your mind even a single verse of the *Gītā* with its full import your soul can be redeemed. There are hundreds of verses in the *Gītā*, any one of which is enough

to redeem the soul provided one moulds one's life according to it.

It will not be improper if we call the *Gītā* even greater than the Gangā. For he who bathes in the Gangā emancipates only himself—so declare the Śāstras; but he who takes a plunge into the holy stream of the *Gītā* not only liberates himself but can also redeem others.

He who has made a thorough study of the *Gītā* no longer requires the help of any other scripture for the redemption of his soul. This should not be construed to mean that I am belittling the other Śāstras. The *Gītā* is such a wonderful book that it will be no exaggeration if it is called the greatest of all our scriptures. The sage Vedavyāsa has himself said:—

"The *Gītā* should be thoroughly studied and chewed. It will be no longer necessary then to take the trouble of going through the other elaborate scriptures; for the *Gītā* has flowed from the lips of the Lord whose navel is the seat of a lotus." The other scriptures have all issued from the lips of the Ṛṣis, while the Vedas revealed themselves from Brahmā's mouth. The *Gītā*, however, has proceeded from the lotus-like lips of the Lord Himself. Hence it is no exaggeration to declare it as superior to all.

The *Gītā* may be pronounced as superior to the Gāyatrī as well. The muttering of the Gāyatrī brings blessedness to the mutterer alone; while he who has imprinted the *Gītā* on his mind after studying it thoroughly and intelligently can redeem others also. Therefore, we can accord to the *Gītā* a position even higher than that of the Gāyatrī.

If on attaining human birth one fails to read the *Gītā*, to study it, to ruminate upon it and to mould one's life according to it, one has, in my opinion, wasted one's life. We should apply ourselves to the *Gītā* in such a way that it may ever continue to be upon our lips, to dwell in our heart, to ring in our ears, to vibrate our vocal chords, to fill every pore of our body, nay, to inspire our very life, which should be saturated with the *Gītā*. With regard to such a man we can say that his life is blessed and blessed are his parents.

By propagating the teachings of the *Gītā* in the world such a man can redeem not only himself but thousands and hundreds of thousands of his fellow-beings. Though Goswāmī Tulasīdās is no more in this world, he has immensely benefited the world by composing the *Rāmacharitamānasa*. Thousands and hundreds of thousands of people are redeeming themselves through it and will continue to do so as long as this work survives. Similarly the man who having mastered the *Gītā* and moulded his life according to it dedicates his life to the propagation of its teachings, verily it is he who disseminates the ideas of the *Gītā* throughout the world. It is beyond one's telling how many more will be redeemed by him even in future. The Lord has spoken very highly of those who propagate the teachings of the *Gītā*. He has gone the length of saying that "he who diffuses the knowledge of the *Gītā* among My devotees, impresses its meaning and ideas upon their heart, attains to Me through such devotion,

Never was there a person nor can be nor shall be who did Me a more loving service than he." (See Chapter XVIII, verses 68 and 69 of the *Gītā*). Remembering this, we should saturate our life with the teachings of the *Gītā*.

The very day I read this verse and grasped its meaning to some extent, the idea struck me that I should dedicate my life to the *Gītā*. I have not so far been able to saturate my life with the ideas of the *Gītā*; yet I regard this as a very lofty ideal. Therefore, I have a right to request all to saturate their lives with the ideas of the *Gītā*. Then they should be vigorously preached in one's home, state, country, nay, all over the three worlds. (*Kalyan*)

The Search for Happiness

-By R. Krishnaswami Aiyar

1. THE CAUSES OF PAIN AND PLEASURE

It has been stated that it is the Śāstra that tells us what is good and what is not and that it is the Śāstra that regulates our activities. But, as every living being is by nature ever active in the pursuit of the good and in the avoidance of evil, it would seem that the Śāstra claiming to teach us the same things is unnecessary. If really we can know by ourselves what is good and what is evil and if we are able by our own actions to secure the one and avoid the other, there will have been no necessity at all for any Śāstra. But it is learnt by experience that it is ordinarily not possible to have in this world even the slightest pleasure in the manner we should like to have it. While so, how can man by the exercise of his unaided intellect find out the means of attaining happiness in other regions of experience or pursue those means successfully in the absence of the Śāstras preserved by our ancients as prescribing what is good and what is not ?

If we think over this matter a little, we can easily see from our own worldly experiences that we cannot by the use of our mere intellect secure the happiness wanted or escape the misery sought to be avoided. It has been said by great people that in all the three worlds everybody exerts himself only for the sake of happiness and nobody makes the slightest effort to attain misery. If a person is thus ever active in the pursuit of pleasure and in the avoidance of pain, does it not seem a logical conclusion that he must ever be happy ? But our experience is otherwise. We have, therefore, to seek some reason for this phenomenon. To say that the right means to secure an object were adopted, but that the object was not obtained, is on the face of it self-contradictory. It is no doubt true that man by his efforts sometimes obtains some pleasure and at other times avoids some pain; but his object is to have happiness always and his activities are intended to produce only that effect. How can his longing to be ever happy be allayed by obtaining some pleasure occasionally ? When he is ever making efforts to secure that lasting happiness, why does he get only occasionally some

bits of happiness? Is it reasonable to say that such evanescent pleasure is the appropriate effect of his determined and constant efforts? Can we at least say that such a pleasure is really the result of any effort made now? It is seen in the world that a particular kind of effort leading to a particular result at one time does not necessarily lead to the same result if adopted at other times. It may happen that instead of happiness it may lead to misery. A trader begins a trade and without much experience in it easily gets a large profit. The same person after gaining much experience in the course of years and in pursuing the same trade lands himself in loss at another time. If the trade by itself were the cause of his income, how does it happen that he prospers in the beginning and suffers later on? It is said "People plough the lands in the same manner. People follow the Śāstras in the same manner. But, due to the influence of an unseen Power, some rise up and others sink down." It is, therefore, impossible for us to know without the aid of the Śāstras the means for securing happiness or avoiding misery. Nobody who has not followed the Śāstras has ever succeeded in enunciating to the world the means of attaining happiness or escaping misery by the aid of his mere intellect. If he had so succeeded, everybody would be happy by adopting those means and there would be no occasion for any misery at any time. It is seen from this also that the means of happiness or misery must be learnt only from the Śāstra and our unaided intellect can not help us in the matter.

2. THE BLISS OF THE SELF

The means of knowledge known as Direct Perception, Inferential Reasoning and the Authority of the lay Word are common to all people. If it is possible to ascertain the cause of pleasure and pain with the help of these means of knowledge, such ascertainment will be very easy as there are many persons who are very proficient in such means of knowledge. Their conclusions are only to the effect that happiness is had through Sound, Touch, Form, Taste and Smell. But this needs some investigation. Do all the five jointly contribute to happiness or is each one of them competent to lead to happiness? The former alternative is not acceptable; for we experience pleasure even if one of those factors is present. Further the senses grasping them can function only one after another and not simultaneously. It is not, therefore, possible to say that all the five conjointly produce happiness. Nor is it possible to say that each of them individually gives us pleasure; for we see that the very same sensuous experience which gives pleasure to a person at one time is not only unable to give that pleasure when he is stricken down with grief but becomes even an object of disgust. A person whose mind is torn by anxiety cannot enjoy the music of the Vīṇā; in fact, it will be even distasteful to him at that time. We see that in the state of sound sleep there is a complete absence of all those things which we ordinarily consider as the means of happiness and yet there is an experience of happiness unalloyed with any pain. It seems, therefore, that none of those things either individually or conjointly with others is really the cause of happiness. That alone is entitled to the name of a cause which invariably precedes the

birth of an effect and without which the effect is never produced. When we are stricken with grief at being separated from some beloved object, there is no happiness even though music and other "means of happiness" do exist. We see also that, even in the absence of such "means", we have the experience of supreme happiness during deep sleep and spiritual trance. How, then, can we postulate any causal nature in such "means" with reference to happiness? The happiness experienced in the sleep of ignorance itself is beyond compare and is free from any tinge of pain. "But for this unalloyed happiness who can be active and who can even live?" So says the Śruti pointing out the greatness of the happiness of sleep as far above sensuous pleasure. It is well known and within the experience of all that people seek the happiness of sleep deliberately discarding all objects considered as the means of happiness. Do we not see that, if a man enjoying the bliss of sleep is disturbed by somebody ever so dear to him, his first impulse is one of resentment at the disturbance? We can easily learn from this that happiness had without reference to any object of the senses is really the best.

Though during deep sleep happiness is had without reference to any object of the senses, the Śāstra declares that such happiness is mixed with ignorance. If the happiness thus mixed with ignorance but had without reference to any object of the senses is itself far superior to the happiness that can be had through the objects of the senses, is it at all necessary to point out that the happiness of the Self had during the period of spiritual trance, when the veil of ignorance is removed by the realization of the Self, is unlimited and far far above all other happiness? When the light of the Sun screened by the clouds is able to enlighten for us more things than the shining moon can, what shall we say of the light of the sun unscreened by any cloud? Our innate nature is happiness itself and we ever have it with us. But we do not realize it. On the other hand, we begin to seek for it elsewhere in the objective world outside us, just as a person who is ignorant of a treasure buried in his own house goes about begging. The world fascinates us only because of this ignorance. There is no doubt about it.

3. SENSUOUS PLEASURE IS NOT HAPPINESS

Besides what have been stated above there are other considerations also from which we can clearly see that sensuous objects are not the cause of happiness. The word for "object" is "Viṣaya" in Sanskrit. Its primary root meaning is "That which binds well." It is in this view that Śrī Śankarāchārya said in his *Vivekachūḍāmaṇi*:—

शब्दादिभिः पञ्चभिरेव पञ्च
पञ्चत्वमापुः स्वगुणेन बद्धाः ।
कुरङ्गमातङ्गपतङ्गमीन-
भृङ्गा नरः पञ्चभिरञ्चितः किम् ॥

The deer deceived by the sound of music hastens to its doom; the elephant decoyed by the sense of touch becomes captive, the moth lured by the colour of the flame rushes to its death; the fish misled by the sense of taste gets caught; and the bee enchanted by the smell of a flower is caught up within it. These are all deceived, but only by a particular

sensuous object. Man is deceived by all the five senses and their corresponding objects. Need it be said that he easily gets caught ? He does not properly consider the nature of things and he is misled into mistaking what are really the causes of misery as the causes of happiness and he makes tremendous effort to secure them. He does not exert himself to learn what are the true means of happiness or to secure them. On the other hand, the ordinary man does not care to know what true happiness is but longs for sensuous objects, thinks that the securing of those objects is itself happiness and engages himself in the effort to secure them. Bhartṛhari has well said:—

तृषा शुष्यत्यास्ये पिबति सलिलं शीतमधुरं
क्षुधार्तः शाल्यन्नं कवलयति सूपादिकलितम् ।
प्रदीप्ते कामाग्नौ सुदृढतरमालिङ्गति वधूं
प्रतीकारं व्याधेः सुखमिति विपर्यस्यति जनः ॥

"A man with a tongue parched by thirst drinks cool and sweet water. A man suffering from hunger eats food with boiled pulses and other accessories. A man subject to the fever of love embraces tightly his beloved. These are all thus in the nature of remedies for the respective diseases and yet people mistake them for happiness."

If the drinking of cool and sweet water and the other activities are themselves competent to give happiness, it stands to reason that, inasmuch as we want happiness always, we must be prepared to be drinking such water always or always engaging ourselves in any of the other activities; for it is the essence of happiness that we can never have enough of it. That is, no man says: "I have had enough of happiness. I do not want it any more." If happiness is the result of drinking water, we must go on drinking water for ever. Firstly, this is physically impossible and, secondly, if we attempt any such thing, our bodily system will be easily dislocated and become diseased. Can a means of happiness really lead to such a result ? It is well known that concentration on God and other like activities engaged in more and more lead to a deeper and deeper sense of peace and happiness. Similarly the pursuit of sensuous pleasure more and more intensely must lead to more and more happiness; but we see, on the other hand, that it invariably leads to pain and misery. Why is it so ? Those who enunciate the proposition that sensuous objects are the cause of happiness cannot possibly answer this question and their inability to do so is itself proof against the truth of their proposition.

4. THE MEANS OF HAPPINESS

It is a well-known fact that those who ever dwell in the Self never allow their minds to stray towards sensuous objects. We have to learn from this and the several examples given in the Vedas that the bliss of the Self is alone real happiness. It is equally obvious that the blissful Self cannot be realized till the ignorance which is veiling it is removed and that our efforts, therefore, should be directed towards removing this veil of ignorance. It is the primary duty of man to make such efforts. It is only logical to say that ignorance can never be dispelled by anything other than Knowledge. But the knowledge or consciousness that we are all having of ourselves is too vague and general to get rid of that ignorance. Even the theoretical knowledge

of the Self which the learned people get from a study of the Śāstras is incompetent to do so and is no more efficient in this particular than the knowledge possessed by the animals. The only knowledge capable of eradicating the ignorance of the Self is the direct realization of the Self, Ever Existent, Ever Conscious and Ever Free, Brahma, the One without a second and not distinct from our inmost Self. The Vedas proclaim this in hundreds of texts like:—

'तमेव विदित्वातिमृत्युमेति'

"One transcends death by knowing Him alone."

How are we to obtain such a Knowledge? The Veda with a motherly love tells us that it is had through Śravaṇa (hearing), Manana (cogitation) and Nididhyāsana (contemplation). It says:—

'संन्यस्य श्रवणं कुर्यात्'

"Engage yourself in Hearing after renouncing."

It is seen therefrom that the stage of hearing is after renunciation. When is one to renounce? The Veda says:—

'यदहरेव विरजेत् तदहरेव प्रव्रजेत् ।'

"One should renounce on the very day when he gets detachment."

Thus the proper time for Sannyāsa is when one gives up all attachment. The Sannyāsa taken up for the purpose of hearing is known, therefore, as Vividiṣā-Sannyāsa or Renunciation in consequence of a desire to know. This desire to know will arise only if the duties prescribed by the Śāstras are punctiliously performed in a spirit of absolute dedication to God and this is pointed out in the Vedic passage:—

'तमेतं ब्राह्मणा विविदिषन्ति
यज्ञेन दानेन तपसानाशकेन ।'

"The Brahmans desire to know Him through sacrificial rites, gifts and penances without attachment."

The man who is very hungry does not seek anything else but food and in such seeking for food he does not brook any delay. Similarly, that aspirant alone who turns aside from all activities leading to birth and death and is keen about securing without delay the means like Hearing for the attainment of Knowledge can be really said to have the desire to know. Only he who has such a strong desire to know is competent to take up Sannyāsa as a preliminary step towards the spiritual quest leading to true knowledge. Such a desire will not arise in anybody unless his aversion to sensuous objects seen or heard of is firm and unshakable. Such an aversion is possible only to a person whose mind is pure and can see the objects in their real light. The mind becomes pure by the eradication of the sins clouding it. The eradication of sins and the purity of the mind are to be had only through the performance of activities enjoined by the Śāstras with a spirit of dedication to the Lord. These truths are laid down in passages like:—

'धर्मेण पापमपनुदति'

"One discards sin by Dharma."

'योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वाऽऽत्मशुद्धये ।'

"Those who are conversant with the means perform activities, giving up attachment, for the purification of the mind."

We see from these passages of the

Veda and Smṛti that Dharma has got the capacity to counteract sin. He alone will be competent to enquire into the truth of things, whose mind is unclouded by sin. If the mind becomes pure-by the eradication of sin, he will begin to enquire properly and easily attain a sense of detachment from all ephemeral objects of enjoyment from the physical body to the highest Brahmaloka.

5. OUR DUTY TO STRIVE

It is seen, therefore, that it is on man alone that the Śāstras enjoin activities and that it is for him to perform them properly as prescribed by the Śāstras, to get his mind purified by such performance, to acquire an attitude of non-attachment to all sensuous objects as the result of such purity of mind, to take up Sannyāsa consequent upon such detachment, to long acutely and solely for the enquiry into the nature of the Self thereupon, to enter upon the courses of hearing, cogitation and contemplation as steps to the realization of the Self, to realize the Self as clearly as an apple in the open palm of one's own hand, to dispel thereby the veil of ignorance and abide for evermore in the bliss of the Self. The animals, who have no sense of right or wrong, and the celestial beings, who are immersed in the enjoyment of sensuous pleasures and cannot, therefore, have detachment, are both disqualified for any Vedic activities. They cannot, therefore, reach the bliss of the Self by resorting to the steps mentioned above as leading to the same. This is why the Śāstras extol the human birth. Even among human beings there are various grades and even the lowest among them can by devotion to those above them and to God will get higher and higher births and finally get all the ingredients necessary for the attainment of Knowledge, so that they also reach the goal of Self-Realization.

From what has been stated above, it is seen that the cause of pain and misery is embodiment, that embodiment is the result of activities, that action is induced by love or hate, that love and hate result from a mistaken sense of agreeableness and disagreeableness in particular objects, that such a mistaken sense is the fruit of the sense of duality, that the sense of duality is caused by the ignorance of the Self, which is ever One without a second, that such ignorance can be dispelled only by the dawn of the Knowledge of the Self, that as a consequence thereof all the intervening misconception disappears automatically and that pain and misery cease to be. It is clear, therefore, that it is only the realization of the Self that can free us from pain and misery altogether and for ever. The region where such a realization can be had is either this earth or the Brahmaloka. The latter is very difficult to reach as it is attainable only by special and difficult courses of action and devotion. We must, therefore, exert ourselves even here to attain that Knowledge. The Vedas inform us that the Swarga and other regions inhabited by Gandharvas and other celestial beings are unfit for the acquisition of Self-Knowledge. If we leave this human embodiment and get embodied hereafter as animals and lack even ordinary knowledge, what room is there for any attempt at securing the supreme Knowledge? It has been authoritatively stated that, if a person having a human embodiment does not utilize it for the attainment of true Knowledge and dies, Brahma becomes still more away from him.

Leave alone the securing of everlasting happiness, even the evanescent pleasures which we mistake for happiness cannot be obtained without Dharma. Have we not often heard the remark: "So and so has all the things necessary in this world for

happiness. But he has not the good fortune to enjoy them !" It is clear from this that even for worldly pleasures an element which is called fortune but is really the good result of past actions prescribed in the Śāstras is quite necessary. That is why a person does not get what he wants, however much he may try for it to the best of his intelligence. The Śāstras, concerned as they are with the welfare of even those who have worldly desires, enunciate the activities which will lead to the getting of worldly possessions like sons, wives and wealth. If a man can by himself determine the nature of such activities, why should the Veda take the trouble of enunciating them? In fact, as already stated, the very definition of Veda is that which teaches those means which cannot be ascertained by direct perception or by inference.

Happiness, therefore, whether of this world or known to the Śāstras, is clearly seen to be unattainable except through Dharma. We must realize this and take refuge in the Śāstras. We must perform punctiliously the activities prescribed there for us. We can then get the happiness desired. If we avoid the activities prohibited by the Śāstras, we can avoid the consequent misery.

Divine Lamentation

[The Value of Rodana (or Weeping) in Spiritual Life]

-By D. Ramaswamy

One of the methods invariably resorted to by weak and impotent persons for the attainment of their heart's desire is weeping. The fresh-born babe before it knows anything of the world knows a good deal about weeping as a weapon of great usefulness. The weeping of the wife is her strongest argument before which the sternest of husbands will quail, however strong he may feel when it comes to a matter of closely reasoned argumentation. Weeping excites sympathy, disarms opposition, and goes a long way in securing the desired object from the hands of the unwilling giver. It is also designed by nature to indicate pain and the existence of suffering. Instinctively a man in distress weeps, and it is only by the greatest restraint imposed on oneself on considerations of the vulgarity involved in the exhibition of emotions that weeping is stifled where the individuality is strong. Weeping also comes as a solace to the man in desperate circumstances. He finds a relief in shedding tears and sobbing away his woes. He takes to weeping instinctively as it were. In his overstrung state it suggests itself as a relief.

No wonder, then, that the seekers after God also weep and wail a great deal. They feel incomplete without God, who is the Object of their love; they feel desolate and forlorn in having been abandoned by their God in a wilderness of suffering and sorrow; they feel deeply distressed by their helpless plight; they are daily in mortal dread of the tempta-

tions and allurements of the material world, which threaten to drag them away from their spiritual path. Experiencing all these and several other kindred sensations of fear and insecurity, they wring out their hearts in grief and break out into rhapsodies of weeping which are as beautiful in their melody as striking in their desolateness. The songs and psalms of the devout men of yore are nothing but a musical record of the wailing of their souls in the fulness of their longing and the poignancy of their yearning for a God whom they loved, worshipped and sought after.

Intense dissatisfaction at their present state and a keen aspiration to true spiritual greatness shook these devotees to the very foundation of their being and the result is a series of sobbing songs sung out of sheer agony of the soul.

It is only the materially-minded and sordid man-of-the-world who does not feel the existence of a spirit behind and beyond the matter that meets the eye, that can be satisfied with his present state and be content with mere animal existence. He may be troubled by unfulfilled desires and thwarted ambitions in material life; but he is not worried by spiritual wants and longings, of which he knows nothing. But there are others who out of their faith have postulated a God and have made it their pleasure to love Him, their duty to do His behests, and their purpose to reach Him. They are not satisfied with their present lot; they are not content with their present existence. Their soul clamours for a beatific union or a coalescing unity with their God, and they will know no satisfaction nor find any comfort till they attain their ultimate Goal and End, God. It is these disappointed devotees and disquieted spiritualists that have specialized in the art of weeping and have left to us a large legacy of Hymns, portraying their Divine Discontentment.

The loudness of the lament is in direct proportion to the intensity of the longing that prompts you to weep. If you feel like a fish out of water, you are sure to writhe in agony till you are thrown back into the water, or till you die. If you feel only lukewarm in your desolation, then you simply moan in a low tone about your woes. In the course of a man's spiritual progress a certain amount of sick-mindedness is a necessary stage. It must of course not be of the type that develops into cynicism or drifts into athiesm. A dispassionate contemplation of the vanity of human wishes and the emptiness of human endeavour is an absolute prerequisite to spiritual stability. In other words, as soon as a discriminating dissection of our life discloses to us what we really are and have been, and what we really ought to be, Nirveda, or Remorse is an invariable sensation that results out of the introspection. This Nirveda causes the first weeping. When we take stock of our past life, nothing is left to us but to exclaim:—"What a long series of lives on lives have been wasted by me!"

अहो मे महती याता निष्फला जन्मसंततिः ।

"The days that are past have gone away like the dreams of a dumb man, useless and unexpressed."

Like the water that has flown down a river, those days are no more to be,

and there is no possibility of redeeming them from the lap of the past. This feeling of lost chances is so bitter that one of the Ālwārs has cried out, "I wept in sheer dread that all my days have been spent to no purpose". After we have wept out this feeling and risen chastened out of it, without getting disheartened by the alluring argument: 'when so many lives have been spent in sin, where is the spiritual chance hereafter?'—we make a big effort to be pure in the future, and to learn to pine for the God whom we have so long forgotten.

Here again the feeling of our smallness and His greatness oppresses and depresses us; and we are forced to break out with a broken heart, "Where is He, and what am I?" Here is the second lament,—on the unworthiness of the individual soul,—laden with past sins and full of potentiality for future sins,—for the realization of the pure and unsullied Godhead. The failure to qualify for true spiritual greatness in the past was the first cause of grief; the incapacity to qualify for it in the present is the second cause and a more disquieting one. This feeling is also in turn wept out. Wide reading and deep reflection on the Lord's abounding Soulabhya (approachability) dispel all fears born of inequality, and it is realized that with all His greatness God is not quite unapproachable, since He is always amenable to love or Bhakti.

But how to love Him? Love for all the pleasures of the senses we have. But love for God, who is Atīndriya or beyond the senses,—how are we to get it? We are not accustomed or habituated to that sort of love, and how are we going to cultivate it? Śrī Kūreśa known also as Alwan, beautifully bemoans this unfitness for God-love. "I have got an inordinate desire", says he, "for all the pleasures of the body, but none whatever for Your Feet. My mind is every moment tormented by diverse things such as disease, poverty, want of joy, getting things I don't desire, not getting things I hanker after, and my irritating inferiority-complex; but never once have I been worried by the thought that I do not bear any love to Thee." An Ālwār says: "I have not a single qualification in me that can evoke God-love; and still like a blind man I grope in the darkness for a God whom I have not even learnt to love." Lust is of the flesh, but love is of the spirit. A gracious God ever watchful of His devotees' interests hears this wail, and fills the heart of the sincere devotees who can thus cry out in agony and despair, with a deep and lasting love towards His Feet.

Then comes the next stage in the lament of the soul, which is now charged with an intense love and yearning towards a God who has been understood to be the Repository of all goodness and grace. And now begins the game of hide-and-seek between the lover and the Object of his love, between the seeker and the Sought. The soul in its newly taught love hankers for and rushes after God to fulfil itself. But God eludes; for He thinks that the love is not yet keen enough to merit fulfilment. But the individual soul feels as if it would burst with this unfulfilled love. The love grows and grows, easily outgrows the body; then it outgrows the world and the seas and all the spheres; then it outgrows the

feeling soul itself; then it envelops the Object Itself, GOD, than whom nothing can be bigger. And thus enveloped and belittled by the all-consuming love of the Jiva, which has now grown to cosmic proportions, God yields Himself up to the delectation and enjoyment of the sincere devotee who has wept and wept and whipped his love from the smallest size to the biggest possible. The stages in the growth of love here described appear short; but Nammālwār, who has clearly marked them out in his songs, had to wail and weep through over a thousand stanzas charged with emotion and fervour, before this God-embracing love was vouchsafed to him. But such is the potency of weeping for God that a small child under a tamarind tree was able to outgrow in love the big Brahmā by the sheer strength of its loud lamentations in the ecstasy of an unfulfilled love felt for the lotus feet of the Lord, who was made to feel that even a remote Paramapada is not secure from the reach of the loud notes of a languishing and agonized soul below, pining from love and crying aloud for the fulfilment of that love. Nammālwār's songs, especially those of the Tiruvoimozhi, are the best exponents of this cult of weeping as a method of God-Attainment. Among the Saivite saints Māṇikkavāchaka has won a Tamil title, which means "one who reached God by the strength of his weeping".

This does not mean that weeping as a means to God-Realization is unknown in the great Sanskrit epics and Purāṇas, and that it is purely of Dravidian origin. *Śrīmad Rāmāyaṇa* has been somewhere pertinently characterized as half weeping and half forest. Like all half-truths this remark is not without justification. For, a perusal of that mighty epic will convince anyone that those who weep for God-Realization get it as certainly as, and perhaps more quickly than, those who pursue the time-honoured method of winning their spiritual freedom by the slow process of Jñāna, Karma and Bhakti. If there are any two characters in *Śrīmad Rāmāyaṇa* who could be said to have pined out of love for Śrī Rāma, they are Bharata and Sītā. And Vālmīki has set apart two out of his six Kāṇḍas proper for their lamentations, one for each,—Ayodhyākāṇḍa for Bharata, who could weep in the midst of his comrades and his subjects, 'विललाप सभामध्ये', and Sundarakāṇḍa for Sītā, who could flood an Aśokavana with the tears of her Śoka (grief) and render it more arid than a forest—

कान्तारमध्ये विजना विसृष्टा
बालेव कन्या विललाप सीता ।

It is not the case with the *Rāmāyaṇa* alone. *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* illustrates the potency of weeping even more markedly. The illiterate and untutoured Gopis, who knew nothing but the dictates of their heart, and pursued no policy other than the bent of their desires, felt considerably grieved over the separation from the bewitching Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who had hidden Himself from them, their hearts with Him. Their misery and affliction at not finding Śrī Kṛṣṇa in their midst take a most melodious form, and people to this day refer to their lamentation by the name of Gopikā-Gīta. They first sang in praise of the eluding Lord who had forsaken them; then they fell to weeping discordantly; ultimately they began to wail without words and set up a cry which

proved effective. Śuka Maharṣi, who tells the story of their agonized cries, declares thus:—

इति गोप्यः प्रगायन्त्यः प्रलपन्त्यश्च चित्रधा ।
रुरुदुः सुस्वरं राजन् कृष्णदर्शनलालसाः ॥

And closely following this sweet Rodana and in answer to it there is Āvirbhāva or Appearance, and the Lord presents Himself before the weeping Gopīs, a thousandfold more beautiful and more enchanting than before—

तासामाविरभूच्छौरिः स्मयमानमुखाम्बुजः ।
पीताम्बरधरः स्रग्वी साक्षान्मन्मथमन्मथः ॥

Here the Maharṣi has shown in eloquent words how Rodana can successfully compel the Appearance of God, who is said to be so difficult of attainment. As an eminent Pundit pointed out while commenting on these Ślokas, it looks as if the same ease and certainty of God's grace, which Rodana is able to attract, has not been vouchsafed to Vedana or knowledge. The claims of a devout Bhakta like Akrūra and a pious Sage like Uddhava, who also seek the Lord in the fulness of their wisdom or Jñāna, appear to be postponed to the clamorous and loud insistence with which the Gopīs assail the Lord of their ignorant hearts. The reason is not far to seek. The Grace of the Lord is said to be intolerant of sorrow or affliction in the loving devotee. The disciplined devotion of Akrūra and Uddhava could brook testing, and their patience could put up with delay. But the Gopīs in the intensity of their passion for a God who had plundered their hearts would have sung themselves to death and wept themselves to annihilation if then and there they did not secure the Object of their love.

Arjuna furnishes another proof of the fact that with the arising of Grief in the Devotee there arises Grace in the Lord. The eighteen chapters of the *Bhagavad-gītā* are only an answer to the grief that arose in the heart of Arjuna, who became Śokasaṃvignamānasa; for as Sañjaya says, the Lord delivered Himself of the *Gītā* only in answer to the disheartened Arjuna with eyes filled with tears and mind torn asunder by Viṣāda:—

तं तथा कृपयाविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम्
विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ।

As explanations are furnished and positions made clear, Arjuna changes the ground of his grief. The initial sorrow at having mercilessly to mow down his own relatives in the war yields place to grief at his own spiritual lowliness and weakness and that in turn is ultimately transformed into abject misery at not being able to reach the God who stands within the reach of his hand and yet eludes him so completely. It is in answer to this Charama Śoka or Ultimate Grief that the Charama Śloka or the Last Word in God-Attainment has been given to the world. The mercy of the Lord could not brook the sight of the misery which was depicted in Arjuna's face when he listened to the tortuous and interminably long method set out in the penultimate Śloka beginning with 'मन्मना भव' and at the mere sight of his pitiable plight the flood-gates of the Lord's Grace were opened and not only Arjuna but the whole race of grieving and heartily-God-sick humanity who are out to reach Him has been deluged by that Divine Outpour of Mercy, Grace and Love. The words 'मा शुचः' (Don't grieve) have been addressed from the

Charioteer's Seat in Arjuna's Car to the whole of humanity who crave for the Lord's company, hanker for His Grace, and pine for His love.

Based on this Declaration of Divine Dispensation there has arisen a new cult,—the cult of Prapatti or Self-Gift. The first and foremost qualification for this Surrender or Self-Gift is the feeling of unutterable woe and dire helplessness. Ākiñchinya or the realization of self-nothing-ness is a *sine qua non* for the Prapanna. He must feel his utter desolateness in all its aspects, and comprehend the full significance of his spiritual solitariness. He must realize that he is alone,—absolutely alone,—in this huge and vast world, with nothing and no one, not even himself, to rely on, except God. The sense of solitariness must be forced upon him to such an extent that he can clearly see his soul in its naked helplessness, when the encasing bodies, and not merely friends and relatives, are cast out, and it is left to march out in its lonely quest after God. The sense of his weakness must be so deeply realized that what will be left to him here below is only to weep and weep, even as Sītā imprisoned in Lankā wept—लङ्कारुद्धविदेहराजतनयान्यायेन लालप्यते or as a Nammālwār, who felt that he had been banished from God's grace into the bodily environment. It is only such intense grief that can provoke and invoke the Grace of the Lord; for He is not an unwise Being to waste His love on those who do not want Him, however much He may feel compassionate towards them. The words 'मा शुचः' clearly indicate that the person to whom they are addressed is afflicted and depressed by a consuming grief from which nothing but the Lord's assurance can uplift him. If, however, the seeming devotee lulls his conscience by the thought that Keśava is Doṣa-Bhogya or a lover of sins, and that, therefore, his very sins will save him,—or if he hypocritically says that as God's Kaṭākṣa or Grace is Nirhetuka, *i. e.*, relies on no effort of the devotee, and thereby gets confirmed in his spiritual indolence, no God can or will save him. God is certainly Doṣa-Bhogya and loves the faults of His true Devotees. He is certainly Avyāja-Vatsala, and spends His love for no recompense or return. But He must and will be satisfied that there is true love or craving in the Prapanna for Him, and that it is not a lip-deep avowal, having its root in indolence, hypocrisy and sinfulness, with never the slightest pang of grief or remorse in the heart. To say that Vasiṣṭha or Vāmadeva pursuing the path of Bhaktiyoga is rejected and preference is accorded to a pretending Prapanna, who gloats over his sins as his saviours, and revels in his ignorance and indolence, with a covert sneer and an ill-concealed contempt for all spiritual effort and true spiritual endeavour, may be a catching system; but it cannot be true. God rewards the true Prapanna sooner because he can weep as no Bhaktiyogī can weep in the early stages of his Niṣṭhā, because he can brook no delay which the Bhaktiyogī can think of tolerating. It is the Ārti, or the intense and consuming desire, that marks out the Prapanna from the beginner in Bhaktiyoga-niṣṭhā, and it has been truly remarked that Prapatti is more severe and austere than Bhakti. God must be made to feel that nothing but His saving Grace can put an end to the

Mumukṣu's inconsolable affliction, born of love towards Him, and seeking for final and complete fulfilment in Him. Till that stage is reached, wherein love finds response and desire gets satisfaction, man has got to go on weeping, wailing, sorrowing, bemoaning and lamenting, tearing out his heart in misery and in despair. And not till the Glory of God has settled on him, and he has been gathered to the breast of his Beloved, and folded within the loving embrace of the Divine arms, can this weeping cease, and yield place to the endless ecstasy of the Mukta, rejoicing in the company of the Lord, revelling in the Beauty of His Form, and rhapsodying in the highest Bliss of Divine Communion.

A Peep into the Illustration

In the river Yamunā there was a deep pool inhabited by a serpent, Kaliya by name. Its water used to boil on account of the burning poison of the snake. Birds flying through the air over the pool would fall down dead. Touched by the breeze that bore the spray from its poisonous waves all vegetation near the pool died out, and any living creature approaching it met with instantaneous death. When the Lord came to know that the poison of the serpent was extremely virulent and strong, and that on account of it the river had been vitiated, He made up His mind to oust the serpent and climbing up a lofty Kadamba tree suddenly jumped into the deep pool of poisonous water. The water of the pool had been boiling due to the heat of the terrible poison. Fearful waves of red and yellow colour had been rising on its surface. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa jumped into it the pool was all the more agitated. Here we find the Lord in the midst of the agitated waters.

An Appeal for Japa of the Divine Name

हरे राम हरे राम राम राम हरे हरे।
हरे कृष्ण हरे कृष्ण कृष्ण कृष्ण हरे हरे॥

The whole world is groaning inwardly at present. Tyranny, persecution, immorality, disputes, sin, war and destruction are on the increase everywhere. The increasing aversion towards religion and God is turning humanity into a race of cannibals. As a result natural calamities have also increased. Earthquakes, floods, drought, famine, food-scarcity and epidemics have become alarmingly frequent. None knows where they will lead us to. Under such circumstances resorting to God is the only way out of this inferno of calamities. Taking to the repetition of the Divine Name is essential for complete self-surrender to God. There is no calamity which will not yield to the Divine Name and there is nothing which cannot be achieved by the Divine Name. Powerful counter forces might delay the achievement, but the Divine Name is infallible in bringing its reward. In this dark age of Kali the Divine Name is our only resort. Therefore, for the good of India and the world at large everybody should repeat and sing the Divine Name both for worldly gains and other-worldly peace and happiness, nay, even for reaching the ultimate goal of our existence, viz., God-Realization. The blessed subscribers and readers of the Kalyana-Kalpataru have been performing Nāma-Japa themselves as well as inducing their friends and relations to do the same every year. Last year an appeal was issued for the performance of 20 crores of Japa of the above Mantra of 16 names. It is a pleasure to note that thousands of men and women have performed the Japa at several hundred places. The list of the places and the volume of Japa performed will be published in the 'Kalyan'. We are sincerely grateful to all those who have participated in this sacred drive.

In spite of the great efficacy possessed by the Divine Name it is open to one and all, irrespective of sex or caste, to repeat It. So this year also we expect the religious-minded readers of the Kalyana-Kalpataru to devote their energy to the practice of Nāma-Japa for their own benefit as well as for the good of their country, religion and the world at large and induce others to do the same. As in the previous years our appeal this year too is for 20 crores. The Japa should be started on Kartika Sukla 15, corresponding to November 13, 1951 and concluded on Chaitra Sukla 15, corresponding to April 10, 1952.

It is not necessary to do the Japa at a fixed place and at fixed hours. From the moment of quitting the bed early in the morning to the moment of retiring at night, it may be performed at any time and in any condition whatsoever. A rosary may be kept either in the hand or in the pocket for counting the number of repetitions or the number may be

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counted along with each repetition. If the Japa gets discontinued owing to illness or some other reason, somebody should be asked to complete the required number. If it is not possible to arrange this, intimation should be sent to the following address so that arrangements may be made to complete the same by proxy here. If a break occurs in the Japa due to some unavoidable reason and it is neither possible to send that intimation to this office nor to have the Japa completed by proxy, even then there is no harm. The more repetitions one can perform the better. Dependence on the Divine Name is unfailing and redeems one from great fears. I have every hope that, if the kind readers of the 'Kalyan' and the 'Kalyana-Kalpataru' make earnest efforts in this direction in their localities, I shall receive before the next issue is out promises of Japa far exceeding the number for which I have appealed. Therefore, everybody should sincerely take part in this holy enterprise.

RULES

1. The Japa may be started on any date, but the vow should be taken to have been completed on April 10, 1952. It would be better still if it is continued even after that date.

2. Persons of all castes and communities and of every age and sex can undertake this Japa.

3. Everyone should repeat the Mantra at least 108 times every day.

4. Persons sending intimation of collective Japa should intimate only the number of repetitions performed through their agency. Names of persons need not be sent. It is enough for the organizer to send his own name and address.

5. Intimation should be sent of the number of repetitions of the whole Mantra as such, and not of the individual Divine Names comprised in the Mantra. For instance, if an individual undertakes to complete one full round of 108 repetitions of the above-quoted Mantra of 16 names with the help of a rosary, the number of repetitions performed by him should be reckoned as 108 only and not 108 x 16. Deducting 8 from the above as an allowance for possible errors, he will be deemed to have performed 100 repetitions. This is how the calculation should be made and intimation should be sent of the total number of repetitions performed as above from the day on which the Japa is actually started till April 10, 1952.

6. Intimation of the Japa should be sent to the Nāma-Japa Section, 'Kalyan' Office, Gorakhpur (U. P.).

Hanumanprasad Poddar.